



Top enlisted man shares views, ideas

By Staff Sgt. Theo McNamara

3rd Wing Public Affairs

The 3rd Wing's new command chief master sergeant praises people affected by Stop Loss, offers career advice, describes expectations and points out challenges for a better Elmendorf.

Chief Master Sgt. Leo Semmler, who started his new job Oct. 3, will rely on his 25-plus years of Air Force experience to help guide and mentor more than 4,000 enlisted troops in the 3rd Wing.

The command chief master sergeant is the principle liaison between the commander and the enlisted community.

Semmler said he was quickly impressed with Elmendorf. He made an initial visit in early September during the Pacific Air Forces Inspector General's Combat Employment Readiness Inspection out-brief.

"I arrived at the theater for the out-brief early and stood in the lobby watching people walk in, and what I saw really impressed me," he said. "At least 99.9 percent of the people had shined boots, pressed uniforms and sharp haircuts.

"I was equally excited with what I saw inside the theater," he added. "The rafters were nearly coming out of the ceiling. We need to take that excitement and enthusiasm back to the work centers and to the dorms. It needs to be part of our life both during and after duty hours."

The rest of his four-day Elmendorf visit was spent with his predecessor, Chief Master Sgt. Timmothy Dickens, learning about Elmendorf and meeting the people he'll work with here.

Semmler said he walked away from his first meeting with Brig. Gen. Doug Fraser, 3rd Wing commander, Col. Doug Miller, 3rd Wing vice commander, and all the group commanders impressed with Elmendorf's leadership.

To summarize the meeting, he said, "Together the command team generates a cohesive energy that creates a super working environment."

Since taking on his new responsibilities, Semmler has been getting to know Elmendorf's work force, addressing security issues and the needs of security providers.

"While I wasn't here on Sept. 11, I saw the

security measures that had been taken were as good as we could've hoped for, and I'm proud of every Security Forces member, augmentee, and every person who's been pulled for vehicle inspections or door guard duty. We're going to do all we can to improve their working environments," he said.

For instance, to help overcome what the chief calls "climatic challenges," a tent will soon be put up at the vehicle inspection station. The shelter will keep inspectors out of the harsh weather. There are also plans in place to build a more permanent structure where inspectors can get out of the cold to take breaks and complete paperwork.

"America faces something this generation has never seen," said Semmler. "We have to become re-educated; and, like with any new process, there'll be growing pains and learning obstacles. We must overcome the problems, face the new challenges and continue to learn how to do things better. It's the key to force protection and we all need to make an effort to understand why we're doing things the way we are, and why it's so important."

Changes in the way Elmendorf does business have also caused the government to ask that many members stay beyond their normal commitment.

"I truly appreciate what the people affected by Stop Loss are doing to help protect our safety and America's freedoms," he said.

"There's a lot of uncertainty right now in the world. What our government is asking of us is to help ensure our grandchildren enjoy the same freedoms 60 years from now that we do today. While we all try to get through this tough time, I'll ask you to remember that 60 years ago next month, America was attacked at Pearl Harbor. Many of us have relatives who quit their jobs to ensure their grandchildren would enjoy the way of life we have today. Right now, we are at war — and certain measures have been taken to ensure the safety of our generations and beyond," he explained.

While security is one of the chief's biggest concerns, he has other priorities, such as dormitories.

"We have some new dorms and we have some

old dorms, but we must do the best we can with what we have," he said. "Some of the challenges we face are security, cleanliness and safety. It's a concern for me and it must be a number one priority for our mid-level NCOs to ensure that the homes of our single airmen — and that's what they are, homes — are safe, clean and secure.

"Supervisors need to visit the dormitories," he added. "A couple of minutes spent visiting a dormitory gives supervisors the opportunity to make sure that subordinate's needs are being met, that the dorms are being kept up. It also gets the supervisor involved in the lives of their people.

"Like the dormitories, some of the buildings that house our work centers are aging, but it's 'what you do with what you have' that makes a work center what it is. I've visited a handful of work centers and I've seen great attitudes," the chief said. "The appearance of the facilities and the work they're doing is outstanding. The Security Forces and the folks at the 3rd Component Repair Squadron are examples of how applying 'do the best with what we have' can work well."

Personal responsibility and accountability are two other priorities for the chief. "I believe, to some extent, we've lost track of how important these two things are. Every one of us is responsible for our actions," he said. "Part of being responsible is adhering to standards. Every airman, from the most junior airman basic to the most senior chief master sergeant, knows the rules, and we must follow them."

According to the chief, NCOs lose their authority and respect in subtle ways, like allowing airmen to call NCOs by their first name or letting subordinates sit when an officer or chief walks in to the room.

"By doing those things, you're not following through on what you learned in basic training and you're destroying what was taught to your subordinates in basic training.

"At basic, we learned how to take care of each other, we learned how to take care of ourselves, we learned how to exercise and we learned how to be good followers and leaders. If you apply those basic principles correctly, you can accomplish all you set out to accomplish."

Future Air Force leaders ‘purposely developed’

By 1st Lt. Johnny Rea
3rd Wing Public Affairs

The leaders of tomorrow’s Air Force will be “purposely developed” by following a common career map in critical aerospace disciplines.

“We’ve found that our Air Force – as an institution – needs a defined set of competencies, one that will enable our young officers to grow and gain experience in a variety of areas,” said retired Maj. Gen Chuck Link, director of the Developing Aerospace Leaders program office.

Link delivered his leadership development message to hundreds of officers here Tuesday and Wednesday through a series of forums.

The DAL initiative was created to examine and recommend actions necessary to prepare the Air Force’s total force for leadership into the 21st century. An initiative first established by former Chief of Staff Gen. Michael Ryan and placed in a more permanent status by the current CSAF, Gen.

John Jumper, the program focuses on understanding the leadership needs of a transforming aero-space force, and designing a development process that ensures airmen are prepared for service in the complex future battlespace.

Link said the Air Force of the future must deliberately develop leaders who can be articulate in staff, joint and operational assignments, regardless of their core specialty. Integrated process teams have already organized nearly 40 “feeder specialties” into about a dozen core specialties.

“Our young officers will first become experts in their fields and attain a level of competency, then branch off to another to gain an understanding and appreciation of that field,” Link said. “We’ll still need specialists; we just don’t need them to spend their entire careers in the same field.”

The new concept will make it easier for young officers to succeed, according to Link. “What today is sometimes a mystery will soon become easily understandable. Someone new to the Air

Force will know what the Air Force needs and will have a clear map available to achieve success.”

Link said the Air Force is less than two years away from identifying and beginning the transformation of future leaders into the first two core specialties: space and acquisition. A year later, the core areas of logistics readiness and maintenance will be highlighted. He expects the DAL construct to be “completely implemented and a normal way of life within the Air Force” in five to seven years.

“In the world we live in today, several people are in the officer developmental process,” Link said. “Commanders, supervisors and assignment officers all have an opinion as to your next career move. The DAL construct gives us a common map and is a major step forward in the right direction of growing successful leaders in the developing aerospace force.”

For more information on DAL, log on to <http://www.dal.af.mil>.

Sourdough readers respond to newspaper survey

The *Sourdough Sentinel* is a reliable, well-read source of information for the Elmendorf population, according to a reader survey conducted recently.

About 1,000 surveys were sent out to active-duty and civilian employees — the *Sourdough’s* primary target audience. Responses were received from 148 people, a return rate of 14.8 percent. Here’s what they said:

■ 93 percent read at least occasionally — 75 percent read weekly.

■ 82 percent said the *Sourdough* is, overall, accurate.

■ 71 percent felt the paper is trustworthy.

■ 91 percent found the paper easy to understand.

■ 85 percent said the *Sourdough* keeps them informed on base events.

■ 53 percent did not depend on the *Sourdough* for news on the Air Force’s involvement in the world, 10 percent said they did and 37 percent had no opinion.

■ 32 percent said the *Sourdough* did not keep them sufficiently informed on personnel policies, 25 percent said it did and 43 percent had no opinion.

■ 36 percent said the paper did not offer enough information on pay and benefits, 29 percent said it did and 35 percent had no opinion.

■ 96 percent said the paper provided at least a satisfactory amount of stories recognizing people.

■ 95 percent said the amount and quality of photos and graphics in the paper was at least satisfactory.

■ 82 percent said the *Sourdough* was at least a satisfactory source of information on valued topics—3 percent said it was excellent, 28 percent said it was very good, 52 percent said it was satisfactory and

18 percent said it was unsatisfactory.

■ Given a list of 28 topics ranging from Air Force leadership to base crime, readers rated whether the paper printed too much (1), just the right amount (2) or too little (3) information on each topic. Averages ranged between 2.01 for promotions to 2.33 for base recreational activities and retirement benefits. In other words, readers found that, for the most part, the *Sourdough* publishes the right balance of information.

If you have a comment regarding the *Sourdough Sentinel*, call the *Sentinel* staff at 552-2493.

Five Elmendorf airmen selected for OTS

The Air Force announced 194 airmen have been selected to receive a commission upon completion of Officer Training School. Five of the seven applications from Elmendorf were approved, a 71 percent selection rate. Tech. Sgt. Frank Burns of the 3rd Component Repair Squadron; and Staff Sgts. Samuel Peters of the 3rd Security Forces Squadron, Frank Slaughter of the 3rd Medical Support Squadron, Jessie Valdez of the 3rd Aerospace Medicine Squadron and Eric Verburg of the 3rd Logistics Support Squadron were selected. The Air Force Recruiting Service conducted OTS Selection Board 0201, which met at

Randolph Air Force Base, Texas, in October. The board considered 595 applications and picked 430 for a 72-percent selection rate. As part of the selection process, board members review both objective and subjective factors. Objectively, the board considers each applicant's academic discipline, grade point average, and Air Force Officer Qualifying Test scores. Subjectively, board members evaluate work experience, accomplishments, adaptability, character, leadership ability, potential for future growth, and other recommendations. For active-duty enlisted people, performance reports and

commander's recommendations are also evaluated. A minimum of three Air Force colonels review every application. The selection process is similar to an Air Force officer promotion board. No single factor leads to someone's selection or nonselection, said OTS selection officials. OTS selectees can expect class assignment information about eight weeks after their physical is certified for commissioning, officials said. The OTS boards meet about every six weeks at AFRS. For information concerning OTS and the application process, active-duty people should call the education office office at 552-2198, and civilians should contact an Air Force recruiter.

Enlisted supplemental board set for Dec. 14

RANDOLPH AIR FORCE BASE, Texas — Applications for the next senior enlisted supplemental promotion board, scheduled for Jan. 14, must arrive at the Air Force Personnel Center here by Dec. 14. Because the senior master sergeant evaluation board is scheduled for Jan. 23, this board will primarily consider chief master sergeant cases. The only exceptions are those master sergeants who will be affected by high year of tenure, mandatory

retirement or certain cases that were directed to meet the board by the Air Force Board for Correction of Military Records. Each year, about 100 to 200 enlisted people request consideration for promotion by a semiannual enlisted supplemental board, said Chief Master Sgt. Greg Haley, chief of enlisted promotions and the military testing branch here. "The supplemental requests are from people who met the original

chief or senior master sergeant evaluation boards with either erroneous data or information missing from their selection folder," he said. "But not all requests make it to the supplemental board." The promotions branch receives many unsubstantiated supplemental requests, and officials urge people to know the requirements before submitting, or to try and avoid the process altogether. "People should do everything they

can to eliminate the need for supplemental consideration," Haley said. "They must ensure all the information on their data verification RIP [form] is correct, and everything that should be in their selection folder at AFPC is indeed there." For more information on supplemental board requirements, contact the Military Personnel Flight customer service section at 552-8080 or visit the AFPC website at www.afpc.randolph.af.mil.

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Services ends fiscal year on a good note

By Maj. Thomas Joyce
3rd Services Squadron commander

Thanks to our customers and shareholders, the 3rd Services Squadron had a fantastic fiscal year 2001. The squadron operates a big business on Elmendorf — more than 600 military and civilian professionals work in 35 diverse activities providing support to the 3rd Wing and 25,000 base customers.

These activities include food services, lodging, Fitness Center, Polar Bowl, Eagleglen Golf Course, the Susitna and Kashim clubs, Aero Club, Skills Development Center, Hillberg Ski Area, Family Camp, Outdoor Recreation, Seward Air Force Recreation Camp, Community Center, Child Development and Youth Center programs, Mortuary Affairs and Base Honor Guard.

We made a number of significant strides this year. Our morale, welfare, and recreation activities generated a year-end profit of \$878,000, which was more than \$300,000 better than 2000 results. The money made in MWR activities goes right back into them, whether it’s buying new equipment, replacing aging equipment or renovating the facilities.

■ The Polar Bowl, the largest bowling center in the Air Force, invested \$270, 000 to replace all 40 lanes. This winter, we’ll install glow-in-the-dark carpet, and probably break ground on the A&W Root Beer and Taco John’s fast food outlets next summer.

■ The Eagleglen Golf Course had an amazing summer season as well. The completion of the \$2.3 million irrigation system and an enthusiastic staff made for superb playing conditions and happy golfers.

■ Lodging renovated 50 temporary lodging facilities for our transient families and consoli-

dated six aircrew quarters into one with 26 fully renovated suites.

■ The Susitna Club continues to serve guests with style and grace, whether it’s an Airman Leadership School graduation or special function for distinguished visitors. This year you’ll see the lobby and hallways get a facelift.

■ The Skills Development Center has added a new computerized mat cutter and a computer-driven engraving machine. A new ceramics program, the Mud Shop, is offering patrons more classes and better technical assistance than ever before.

■ The Community Center added a 24-foot climbing wall, a batting cage and a computer center.

■ The Family Child Care staff built a Lending Library from scratch in the old Base Exchange next to the Health and Wellness Center.

■ Seward Air Force Recreation Camp went from losing \$54,000 in 2000 to making \$17,000 this year. A successful business plan changed the camp’s focus from “fishing only” to “family outdoor adventures.”

This year’s budget allows for more than \$800,000 to improve our programs and activities. The squadron submitted a golf course clubhouse project to Headquarters Pacific Air Forces and will compete with other projects for Air Force funding this coming year.

A new Child Development Center will be built across the street from the Denali CDC, tentatively scheduled to open in 2003. The renovation of the Fitness Center’s pool also should be completed soon.

The squadron won two Air Force level awards in 2001 with its food service operation and base library being named Best in Air Force. It was the only services squadron in the Air Force to receive

the Commander-in-Chief’s Special Recognition for Installation Excellence in 2001.

The creative Hennessy award-winning food service team didn’t rest on its laurels after being named Best in Air Force in 2000. Instead, they got even better by developing the first-ever AF theme dining facility at the Kenai Dining Hall and buffet-style holiday meals at the Iditarod Dining Hall.

3rd Services also played a huge role in the success of the 2001 Special Olympics World Winter Games held in Anchorage, March 4-11. More than 750 Team USA athletes, coaches, and escorts were lodged in our North Star Inn and fed in our dining facilities.

Services also demonstrated its readiness during aerospace expeditionary force deployments to Prince Sultan Air Base, Saudi Arabia, and Incirlik Air Base, Turkey, and provided tactical field exchange and feeding operations during the 3rd Wing’s Combat Employment Readiness Inspection.

The squadron ended their year of hard work with an exemplary show of service Sept. 11 when, shortly following the terrorist attacks, a civilian airliner with military personnel and families headed to Japan was forced to land at Elmendorf shortly after departing Seattle. 3rd Services Squadron military and civilian personnel teamed with the 732nd Air Mobility Squadron, the 3rd Transportation Squadron, the 3rd Mission Support Squadron, the Family Support Center and Chapel staff to help the stranded passengers. One passenger, a master sergeant assigned to Misawa Air Base, later said, “We were immediately provided shelter, food, and as many amenities as they possibly could provide. My heartfelt, personal thanks to lodging and those folks at the Community Center who put up with an awful lot during those three days.”

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COURTESY PHOTO

Parents of School-Age Program children, such as Kayleieh Elliot (left), 7, and Kristin Horton, 7, can participate in an ice cream social Wednesday from 4-6 pm at programs sites. The social is one of many special activities the 3rd Services Squadron has planned for Military Family Week, Sunday through Nov. 24.

Military Family Week

By Mary M. Rall
3rd Services Marketing

With so much happening in our day-to-day lives, it's easy to overlook the many contributions of the military family.

The 3rd Services Squadron would like to show its appreciation for these families by offering a number of special activities and programs during National Military Family Week, Sunday through Nov. 24.

Families can start the week off by grabbing a spoon and heading to the School-Age Program's Ketchikan site, the Polar site and Stars of Gold site. Parents of children enrolled in the School-Age Program can participate in a family ice cream social Wednesday

from 4-6 p.m.

Family members can keep the good times rolling at the Polar Bowl Monday through Wednesday from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Families can spend the afternoon bowling for just 50 cents a game.

The Young Adult Center will open its doors Tuesday at 3 p.m. for some family-oriented fun around the playing table at the Family Dominoes Tournament.

The fun heads outside Wednesday from 4-6 p.m. The center will host a Family Sledding Day at Hillberg Ski Area. Families can enjoy free hot chocolate as they sled.

Free sports drinks will be available throughout the week at the Fitness Center.

The Library will observe Military Family Week Sunday through Nov. 24 with

a "Bring Your Parents to the Library" theme. Children will be able to register for a free prize when they bring a parent to the library. A drawing for the prize will be held Nov. 26.

You can eat and spend quality time with your child during your lunch hour Wednesday. Enjoy a delicious meal and your child's company at the Denali and Katmai CDCs. Please see your child's teacher for more information and lunch schedules.

Taxing demands are often placed on military families, and it can be difficult to express adequate appreciation for their contributions. Military Family Week is set aside to specifically thank these families for their daily support.

▶ **SCORE A BIRDIE:** Watch players take a shot at winning a Thanksgiving bird at the Turkey Shoot Racquetball Tournament. Categories include Open, A, B, C, and Novice players, and turkeys will be awarded for the first three places in each category. 552-5353

▶ **MOVIE:** *Don't Say a Word (R)*. A child psychiatrist has to unlock the mind of a patient to save his daughter. Starring Michael Douglas. 7 p.m.

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▶ **BEAT FEET:** Enjoy the last run of the season before the hard freeze arrives at the Fitness Center's Frostbite Classic Fun Run and Walk Saturday at noon. The 5-kilometer run supports the Great American Smokeout. A free T-shirt will be given to the first 30 participants who sign up. 552-5353

▶ **MOVIE:** *Don't Say a Word (R)*. See Friday. 7 p.m.

▶ sun

▶ **BOOK SMART:** The Library will observe Military Family Week Sunday through Nov. 24 with a "Bring Your Parents to the Library" theme. Children can register for a free prize if they bring a parent to the library. A prize drawing will be held Nov. 26. Library hours are 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. Monday-Friday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Friday, and noon to 5 p.m. Saturday and Sunday. 552-3787

▶ **MOVIE:** *Hearts in Atlantis (PG-13)*. An orphaned boy forms a friendship with a middle-aged boarder (Anthony Hopkins). Based on a Stephen King novel. 7 p.m.

▶ inside the fence

▶ **Harvest Platter**, today from 7-9 p.m. for \$35 at the Skills Development Center. 552-2470

▶ **Basic Automotive Servicing Class**, today at 6 p.m. for \$20 at the Skills Development Center. 552-2470

▶ **Basic Sign II**, Saturday from 4-6 p.m. for \$30 at the Skills Development Center. 552-2470

▶ **Karaoke Grand Prize Competition**, Saturday at 8:30 p.m. at the Kashim Club. 753-6131

▶ **Give Parents a Break**, Saturday from 3-5 p.m. at the Denali CDC. 552-8304

▶ **Oil Painting Class**, Saturday from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

for \$35 at the Skills Development Center. 552-2470

▶ **Kids' Scarecrow Door Hangers**, Saturday from 1-3 p.m. for \$10 at the Skills Development Center. 552-2470

▶ **Homeschooler Crafts**, Monday from 1:30-3:30 p.m. for \$15 at the Skills Development Center. 552-2470

▶ **Wilton Cake Decorating III**, Wednesday from 6:45-8:45 p.m. for \$35 at the Skills Development Center. 552-2470

▶ **Illuminated Scarecrow**, Wednesday from 6-8 p.m. for \$25 at the Skills Development

Center. 552-2470

▶ **Ice Cream Social**, Wednesday from 4-6 p.m. at School-Age Program sites. 552-2266

▶ **Thanksgiving Buffet**, Thursday from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Susitna Club. 753-3131

▶ **Hillberg Scheduled to Reopen**, Nov. 23. 552-4838

▶ **Family Thanksgiving Bingo**, Nov. 23 at 1 p.m. at the Community Center. 552-2674

▶ **Autumn Greenware 40 Percent Off**, Nov. 23 at the Skills Development Center. 552-2470

▶ **Cross-country Ski Clinic**, Nov. 28 at Outdoor Recreation. 552-2023

▶ fyi

▶ **DYNAMITE DEALS:** Receive a 10 percent discount on various features and fees by presenting your Services card at Services facilities. To become a club member, call 753-3131.

▶ **WEB SLINGER:** Capture fun and deals by checking out the 3rd Services Squadron web site, which offers facility features, rates, activity schedules and more at www.elmendorfservices.com.

The weekend

Serving America: A great responsibility

By Tech. Sgt. Tim Dougherty
Air Force Print News

My 7-year-old son, Alex, asked me a very good question as we were driving cross-country during the past two weeks: “Daddy, how come you’re going to the Pentagon?”

The simple way for me to answer the question was to have him take a look out the window of the car.

“You see that guy over there? I’ve been ordered to the Pentagon for him and his family. I’m going for the lady driving that oversized truck we just passed. I’m going because the people of America need me,” I said.

Although it was a philosophical answer to the question, my two sons seemed to understand my explanation quite well, despite their youth. The reason we serve isn’t always as clear-cut as it is right now.

Before the events of Sept. 11, America was at a relative peace. Our Air Force was deployed



around the world as usual, but there wasn’t any one threat you could point to and say, “I’m defending America from this particular bad guy.”

The terrorist attacks on the nation put into focus the reason we wear the uniform. My trip across the country reminded me of what we are all fighting to protect.

I wear the uniform to keep the gates of Rocky

Mountain National Park open for visitors from across the country and the world. I serve because there are thousands of people in Wisconsin who need to be protected as they cheer on their Green Bay Packers.

I saw countless other examples of America’s freedom — the freedom we all serve to protect — during our 2,500 mile drive.

As my family and I window-shopped at a mall in Council Bluffs, Iowa, tears welled up in my eyes as I looked at a display of New York photographs taken before terrorists destroyed the majestic twin towers. I serve because the people of America are too precious to allow anyone to do this to us again.

Take a moment to get out and truly see the America you serve. You’ll see Old Glory flying higher than ever, and don’t be surprised if someone stops and says “thank you.”

Serving in America’s Air Force is an awesome responsibility, but it’s worth it.

COMUSAFE: Security, safety go hand-in-hand

Risk management keeps troops, families safe during winter

By Gen. Gregory S. Martin
Commander, U.S. Air Forces in Europe

RAMSTEIN AIR BASE, Germany — The events of Sept. 11 have heightened our security awareness and force protection

posture. We must not let the focus on security cause us to become complacent with our safety practices. Safety and security go hand in hand.

Seasonal changes such as rain, fog, snow, long hours of darkness and cold weather are becoming evident as the fall season moves into winter. These factors also increase our safety risks, and when combined with a high operations tempo, they can lead to disastrous situations.

Risk management is the key to avoiding disasters. Commanders and supervisors must help our military members and their families personalize risk management procedures for the upcoming winter and holiday season.

Your personal survival plan should include wearing reflective clothing at night or during periods of poor visibility, winterizing your car and pre-planning your travel to

include plenty of rest. Always keep survival as your top priority.

For most of us, our daily jobs involve taking risks. However, we must ensure they are not unnecessary risks that can result in damage to equipment and, most importantly, injury or loss of life to our most valuable resource — our people.

Contact your unit safety representative for more tips to ensure you have a safe winter season.

Sports News

Hillberg set to open Nov. 23

By Master Sgt. Jon K. Scudder
3rd Wing Public Affairs

Someone needs to pat Mother Nature on the back and thank her for the early start to the winter sports season.

“The early snowfall and cold weather has greatly helped our snow conditions, and we plan to open all the slopes at Hillberg Nov. 23,” said Jerry Witmer, Hillberg manager.

It doesn’t matter if you’re a novice skier or an experienced snowboarder; you’ll find a run that fills your need for speed.

However, if you’re not like Olympic medal winner Picabo Street, and are looking to improve your skills — or create some — Hillberg’s trained staff can help.

“We will offer free beginner ski lessons and beginner snowboard lessons with the purchase of a daily hill pass and rental,” said Witmer. “If you’re looking for private or group lessons, they start at just \$25.”

Additionally, Witmer said there are many new improvements at Hillberg this year. They include

newly cut, challenging ski runs, a re-designed half pipe and terrain park, and a series of groomed cross-country ski trails.

And if you don’t already have the equipment or want to try it before you buy it, you can do so at the rental center. With more than 800 pairs of skis and 250 snowboards, you’re sure to find something that fits.

This year you’ll find new rental equipment, including all new shaped skis and boots. And if you need ice skates, sleds or ice fishing shacks and related equipment, they’re also available at the rental center.

If you’re thinking about buying equipment, Hillberg’s Pro Shop is just the place. It has a large selection and some of the best prices around on top-quality skis and snowboards, so you can gear up without cashing out.

The staff can help you maintain your equipment with full ski and snowboard tune-ups and waxing, binding mounting, base repair and more. If you need your ice skates sharpened, they’ll be happy to do that as well.

Whatever your poison, Hillberg’s prices are easy on the wallet. With family passes for just \$450 for the year and individual passes starting at just \$150, you don’t have to end up in the poor house to get your winter fix.

And after you’re done skiing or just taking a break, there’s a place to relax and watch the big screen while enjoying a newly-expanded snack bar menu.

So instead of sitting at home watching the Sunday afternoon game, consider getting out and enjoying winter at Hillberg.

Hillberg’s hours of operation are 3-9 p.m., Wednesday and Thursday; 1-9 p.m., Friday; 10 a.m. to 9 p.m., Saturday; and noon to 7 p.m., Sunday. On holidays the hours are noon to 7 p.m.

The pro shop is open 3-8 p.m. Wednesday and Thursday; 1-8 p.m., Friday; 10 a.m. to 8 p.m., Saturday; and noon to 6 p.m., Sunday and holidays.

For more information, call the ski hotline at 552-4276 or the pro shop at 552-4838.

Sports Shorts

Bowlers needed

The intramural bowling league needs bowlers. Active-duty military, Department of Defense civilians assigned to units and family members over 18 are eligible. Call 552-1673 to sign up.

Fun run

The Fitness Center’s Frost-bite Classic Fun Run and Walk is today at noon. Call 552-5353 for information.

Spinning classes

The Fitness Center offers spinning classes every Monday, Wednesday and Friday at 11 a.m. and 5:30 p.m., and every Saturday at 11 a.m. Call 552-5353 to sign up.

Ski Clinic

Outdoor Recreation hosts a Cross Country Ski Clinic Nov. 28. Call 552-2023 to sign up.

Personal trainer

The fitness center has a trainer available for personalized workout programs. Call 552-5353 for an appointment.